

Abstract

A prosthesis system replaces facet joints on adjoining vertebral bodies. The prosthesis system employs a caudal prosthesis for fixation to a first 5 vertebral body and a cephalad prosthesis for fixation to the second vertebral body. The caudal and cephalad prostheses have, respectively a first artificial caudal facet joint structure and an artificial cephalad facet joint structure, to replace all or a portion of, 10 respectively a caudal and cephalad portions of the natural facet joint (i.e., superior and inferior articular processes, respectively) between the adjoining first and second vertebral bodies. The prosthesis system further employs a second artificial caudal facet joint 15 structure fixed superior to the artificial cephalad facet joint structure on the second vertebral body. The second artificial caudal facet joint structure replaces all or a portion of a caudal portion of a natural facet joint (i.e., a superior articular process) between the second 20 vertebral body and an adjoining third vertebral body superior to the second vertebral body.